

**Committee for a Better Environment
Council Chambers
City Hall, College Park
July 22, 2013
7:00 PM**

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Suchitra Balachandran	X	
Stephen Brimer		X
Gemma Evans	X	
Alan Hew	X	
Stephen Jascourt	X	
Benjamin Mellman	X	
Janis Oppelt	X	
Kennis Termini	X	
Ballard Troy	X	
Donna Weene	X	
Richard Williamson		X
Macrina Xavier		X

Guests Present: Mayor Andrew Fellows, Denise M. Palmer, Contract Secretary, Megan Brockett, University of Maryland Journalism Student

Ms. Oppelt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Discussion with Mayor Fellows

Mayor Fellows briefed the committee on the history before and during his tenure as Chair of CBE, presenting a bigger picture perspective of how CBE has evolved and the role it has played. This included a focus on beautification, shifting to an emphasis on stream clean-up, work to improve the Rhode Island Avenue hiker-biker trail, and then an emphasis on planning issues, especially regarding development of the Greenbelt Metro property. He stated that his purpose for attending the meeting was to let CBE know that he is available and wants to share his perspective with CBE and work with CBE to help bring resources to CBE. He discussed initiatives in the formation stages and connections CBE can leverage, such as with the University of Maryland and with the new College Park Academy, among others.

Committee members briefed Mayor Fellows on the various projects and workshops that it has undertaken and discussed including recycling, waste reduction, backyard composting, Good Neighbor Initiatives, sustainability issues, outreach programs with the University of Maryland, community association involvement, permaculture, community gardens, , and enlisting volunteers to assist with the various endeavors. Mayor Fellows suggested that CBE think of ambitious ideas and maintain open lines of communication with him.

2. Follow-up on backyard hens

Mr. Mellman briefed the committee on the benefits of backyard hens and circulated a proposed letter to Council for the committee to review and answered questions. The Committee agreed that the draft letter should be polished up before the next meeting, to finalize at the next meeting and send to Council regarding legislation including specific regulations on how to proceed for those residents interested in having backyard hens.

3. Power lines undergrounding (feasibility?)

Mayor Fellows informed the committee that the City, the University and the State Highway Administration are involved in a feasibility study to bury power lines along Route 1. There are developers who have put money into a fund over the last 10 years. The current plans to upgrade Route 1 include adding a median strip on Route 1, which would make it more scenic and would include bike trails.

4. CBE web pages on City site

Mr. Jascourt indicated that Ms. Oppelt made revisions and asked if the Committee has any new changes. He also suggested committee members take a look at it online and include a date in the file name so that the most recent version can be identified, and this should be completed one week from today. Mr. Jascourt suggested final revisions of website page and fine-tuning of two brochures be completed one week from today, and they be forwarded to Mr. Brown for posting on the website.

5. Home energy efficiency workshop July 24!

Ms. Oppelt gave an update on the workshop to be held on July 24, 2013. It will be held in the lower level conference room and thus far there are nine attendees registered.

6. College Park Day (Sat. Oct. 19)

Mr. Jascourt indicated that it will be held at Linson Pool. Ms. Oppelt reported that she may not be able to attend but suggested that someone else attend so that CBE is represented. Mr. Troy indicated that he will attend. CBE will follow up.

7. Review of minutes from June 24

The Committee reviewed the minutes and made revisions. Ms. Evans made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Ms. Oppelt seconded the motion, and it was unanimous.

8. Nomination and possibly election of new Chair/Co-Chairs, effective by end of September

Mr. Jascourt indicated that he will chair the August, 2013 meeting, but will be in a supporting role thereafter and cannot guarantee his attendance at future meetings. Ms. Balachandran was recommended as a possible new chair, but she indicated she would prefer to focus on the Solid Waste Committee. Ms. Evans will be willing to serve as chair along with a co-chair. Ms. Oppelt made a motion for Ms. Evans to be CBE's first co-chair and agreed to be co-chair. The motion was amended so that the co-chair duties shared with Ms. Evans would be split among Ms. Oppelt and Mr. Mellman, the motion was seconded by Ms. Weene, and the motion passed unanimously. The result is that the three co-chairs will decide how to divide duties, with Ms. Evans holding around 50% and the remainder split between Ms. Oppelt and Mr. Mellman.

9. Other old business

Ms. Termini briefed the committee on the canning and preserves workshop to be held on Saturday, September 7, 2013 at the Old Parrish House from 9:00 am–11:00 am. She will secure parking passes. Active participants will be limited to 12 and the room has been reserved. Ms. Oppelt will work on advertising for the event. Ms. Termini recommended the standard speaker/presenter fee of \$100, \$50 for food, and \$200 for the supplies (canning materials) for a grand total of \$350. Ms. Termini made a motion to allocate \$350 for the workshop, and Ms. Weene seconded the motion. The motion was unanimous.

Ms. Weene suggested a project for the schools involving students using recyclables to create items and having different categories of items with each category having a specific prize. She will introduce the concept to the schools (9-12 grade) and college students. She will work with Mr. Mellman on the concept and will require funds for flyers and prize money. The contest will be limited to College Park residents. She estimates approximately \$300 for prize money and would like to give further details at the August meeting and get a vote.

10. New business

Ms. Evans suggested that CBE recommend to Council that it create a policy for new construction projects and possibly also renovation projects to require the recycling and/or architectural salvage (when appropriate) of building materials from sites with existing buildings or infrastructure. She volunteered to do research on the matter and draft a proposed letter to council.

There being no further business, Mr. Jascourt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. Mr. Troy seconded the motion. The next meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2013 at City Hall.

Minutes prepared by Denise M. Palmer, Contract Secretary